GOD’S PROMISE OF DELIVERENCE

ISAIAH 33:1-24
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Text:

Isaiah 33:1-24,

1. The destroyer is as good as dead, you who have not been destroyed! The deceitful one is as good as dead, the one whom others have not deceived! When you are through destroying, you will be destroyed; when you finish deceiving, others will deceive you!
2. Lord, be merciful to us! We wait for you. Give us strength each morning! Deliver us when distress comes.
3. The nations run away when they hear a loud noise; the nations scatter when you spring into action!
4. Your plunder disappears as if locusts were eating it; they swarm over it like locusts!
5. The Lord is exalted, indeed, he lives in heaven; he fills Zion with justice and fairness.
6. He is your constant source of stability; he abundantly provides safety and great wisdom; he gives all this to those who fear him.
7. Look, ambassadors cry out in the streets; messengers sent to make peace weep bitterly.
8. Highways are empty, there are no travelers. Treaties are broken, witnesses are despised, human life is treated with disrespect.
9. The land dries up and withers away; the forest of Lebanon shrivels up and decays. Sharon is like the desert; Bashan and Carmel are parched.

10. “Now I will rise up,” says the Lord. “Now I will exalt myself; now I will magnify myself.

11. You conceive straw, you give birth to chaff; your breath is a fire that destroys you.

12. The nations will be burned to ashes; like thorn bushes that have been cut down, they will be set on fire.

13. You who are far away, listen to what I have done! You who are close by, recognize my strength!”

14. Sinners are afraid in Zion; panic grips the godless. They say, ‘Who among us can coexist with destructive fire? Who among us can coexist with unquenchable fire?’

15. The one who lives uprightly and speaks honestly; the one who refuses to profit from oppressive measures and rejects a bribe; the one who does not plot violent crimes and does not seek to harm others—

16. This is the person who will live in a secure place; he will find safety in the rocky, mountain strongholds; he will have food and a constant supply of water.

17. You will see a king in his splendor; you will see a wide land.

18. Your mind will recall the terror you experienced, and you will ask yourselves, “Where is the scribe? Where is the one who weighs the money? Where is the one who counts the towers?”

19. You will no longer see a defiant people whose language you do not comprehend, whose derisive speech you do not understand.

20. Look at Zion, the city where we hold religious festivals! You will see Jerusalem, a peaceful settlement, a tent that stays put;
its stakes will never be pulled up; none of its ropes will snap in two.

21. Instead the Lord will rule there as our mighty king. Rivers and wide streams will flow through it; no war galley will enter; no large ships will sail through.

22. For the Lord, our ruler, the Lord, our commander, the Lord, our king—he will deliver us.

23. Though at this time your ropes are slack, the mast is not secured, and the sail is not unfurled, at that time you will divide up a great quantity of loot; even the lame will drag off plunder.

24. No resident of Zion will say, “I am ill”; the people who live there will have their sin forgiven. (NET)

Introduction:

God wanted it understood that He, not Assyria or Sennacherib, is all-powerful. It is God who deserves reverence and respect. God also wanted Sennacherib to learn and remember one of His most amazing truths. Isaiah expressed the same truth that is expressed in Galatians 6:7-9. “Be not deceived; God is not mocked: for whatsoever a man soweth, that shall he also reap. For he that soweth to his flesh shall of the flesh reap corruption; but he that soweth to the Spirit shall of the Spirit reap life everlasting. And let us not be weary in well doing: for in due season we shall reap, if we faint not.” Isaiah gave God’s message to Sennacherib saying, “Woe to thee that spoilest, and thou wast not spoiled; and dealest treacherously, and they dealt not treacherously with thee! when thou shalt cease to spoil, thou shalt be spoiled; and when thou shalt make an end to deal treacherously, they shall deal treacherously with thee.” (Isaiah 33:1) Isaiah prophesied that
Assyria would face doom and destruction. The Jews would be blessed because they acknowledged God’s power and His mercy. They did not need to despair and distress over the approach of Sennacherib and his army because God promised them deliverance. “Now will I rise, saith the LORD; now will I be exalted; now will I lift up myself. Ye shall conceive chaff, ye shall bring forth stubble: your breath, as fire, shall devour you. And the people shall be as the burnings of lime: as thorns cut up shall they be burned in the fire. Hear, ye that are far off, what I have done; and, ye that are near, acknowledge my might.” (Isaiah 33:10-13) The Jews would find security during the reign of Hezekiah. They could have hope for they could say, “The LORD is our judge, the LORD is our lawgiver, the LORD is our king; he will save us.” (Isaiah 33:22)

Commentary:

Isaiah 33:1-13, The destroyer is as good as dead, you who have not been destroyed! The deceitful one is as good as dead, the one whom others have not deceived! When you are through destroying, you will be destroyed; when you finish deceiving, others will deceive you! Lord, be merciful to us! We wait for you. Give us strength each morning! Deliver us when distress comes. The nations run away when they hear a loud noise; the nations scatter when you spring into action! Your plunder disappears as if locusts were eating it; they swarm over it like locusts! The Lord is exalted, indeed, he lives in heaven; he fills Zion with justice and fairness. He is your constant source of stability; he abundantly provides safety and great wisdom; he gives all this to those who fear him. Look, ambassadors cry out in the streets; messengers sent to make peace weep bitterly. Highways are empty, there are no
travelers. Treaties are broken, witnesses are despised, human life is treated with disrespect. The land dries up and withers away; the forest of Lebanon shrivels up and decays. Sharon is like the desert; Bashan and Carmel are parched. “Now I will rise up,” says the Lord. “Now I will exalt myself; now I will magnify myself. You conceive straw, you give birth to chaff; your breath is a fire that destroys you. The nations will be burned to ashes; like thorn bushes that have been cut down, they will be set on fire. You who are far away, listen to what I have done! You who are close by, recognize my strength!” (NET)

**The Lord will intervene to protect and preserve Jerusalem** - *Isaiah 33:1-13:* God addressed Sennacherib as a spoiler and a person who deals treacherously. He was a man of unjust ambitions. He would face certain and sure disappointments because he was fighting against God. God sent a message to Sennacherib by Isaiah saying, “Woe to thee that spoilest, and thou wast not spoiled; and dealest treacherously, and they dealt not treacherously with thee! when thou shalt cease to spoil, thou shalt be spoiled; and when thou shalt make an end to deal treacherously, they shall deal treacherously with thee.” (Isaiah 33:1) God wanted this bloodthirsty leader to understand that he was in trouble. He had destroyed, now he would be destroyed; he had betrayed, now he would be betrayed; others would now deal treacherously with him. On behalf of the Jewish people Isaiah prayed that the Lord would be their strength and defend them every morning. He asked God to deliver the Jews from this strong enemy. Isaiah praised the greatness of God by saying that nations were scattered by the powerful voice of God. Remember, Isaiah understood God’s greatness because he had seen Him “High and lifted up.” Isaiah knew that with God’s help the Jews
could be brave and could attack the enemy. He knew that God had promised victory. He said, “The LORD is exalted; for he dwelleth on high: he hath filled Zion with judgment and righteousness.”  

(Isaiah 33:5) God’s prophet wanted it understood that God is the foundation upon which we must build. True wisdom and knowledge rest with and come from God Himself. Nothing should be more important in our lives than obeying the will of the great God of the Bible. The help that God sent for the Jews did not come from their mighty soldiers. Rather, help came from a messenger of God who destroyed the Assyrian army in one night. As the Assyrian army approached, the Jews lost all joy and hope; the roads were empty, treaties were broken, fields were dry and barren. But the Lord said, “Now will I rise, saith the LORD; now will I be exalted; now will I lift up myself.” (Isaiah 33:10) God said, “Now I will do something and be greatly praised.” Everyone, both far and near, would learn of what God had done to the Assyrians and they would stand in awe of His mighty power.

Isaiah 33:14-16, Sinners are afraid in Zion; panic grips the godless. They say, ‘Who among us can coexist with destructive fire? Who among us can coexist with unquenchable fire?’ The one who lives uprightly and speaks honestly; the one who refuses to profit from oppressive measures and rejects a bribe; the one who does not plot violent crimes and does not seek to harm others—This is the person who will live in a secure place; he will find safety in the rocky, mountain strongholds; he will have food and a constant supply of water. (NET)

_Punishment for the wicked and rewards for the righteous among God’s people - Isaiah 33:14-16:_ Those terrible sinners on Mount Zion were frightened. These were people who professed to be
religious, but they were actually false professors of religion among the people of God. They were much like the man Jesus described who came into the wedding unprepared. **“And he saith unto him, Friend, how camest thou in hither not having a wedding garment? And he was speechless.”** (Matthew 22:12) They appeared outwardly to be religious but their hearts were not right with God. Now they feared punishment. They wondered how it would be possible to withstand the raging, burning fire of an angry God. In a beautiful contrast with those wicked people Isaiah described the blessing of being righteous. **“He that walketh righteously, and speaketh uprightly; he that despiseth the gain of oppressions, that shaketh his hands from holding of bribes, that stoppeth his ears from hearing of blood, and shutteth his eyes from seeing evil.”** (Isaiah 33:15) The psalmist described the righteous in this way, **“He that hath clean hands, and a pure heart; who hath not lifted up his soul unto vanity, nor sworn deceitfully.”** (Psalms 24:4) There will be many wonderful rewards for those who live right, talk right and oppose all kinds of evil and violence. God promised physical and spiritual food for the righteous among His people. He will always protect and provide for those who love and serve Him. **“The young lions do lack, and suffer hunger: but they that seek the LORD shall not want any good thing.”** (Psalm 34:10)

Isaiah 33:17-21, You will see a king in his splendor; you will see a wide land. Your mind will recall the terror you experienced, and you will ask yourselves, “Where is the scribe? Where is the one who weighs the money? Where is the one who counts the towers?” You will no longer see a defiant people whose language you do not comprehend, whose derisive speech you do not understand. Look at Zion, the city where we hold religious festivals! You will see Jerusalem, a
peaceful settlement, a tent that stays put; its stakes will never be pulled up; none of its ropes will snap in two. Instead the Lord will rule there as our mighty king. Rivers and wide streams will flow through it; no war galley will enter; no large ships will sail through. (NET)

The Lord is our glorious King – Isaiah 33:17-21: These Jews would again see King Hezekiah as a glorious King. They would see him in a different way; not as an oppressed leader sitting in sackcloth, but as a victorious King. Those who are righteous will see the, “King of Kings in His glorious kingdom.” “Now unto the King eternal, immortal, invisible, the only wise God, be honour and glory for ever and ever. Amen.” (1 Timothy 1:17) The Jews would celebrate the victory by asking, “Where are those officials who terrified us and forced us to pay such heavy taxes?” God promised the Jews that the King of Assyria would never be allowed into Jerusalem. “Therefore thus saith the LORD concerning the king of Assyria, He shall not come into this city, nor shoot an arrow there, nor come before it with shield, nor cast a bank against it.” (2 Kings 19:32) They would not have to worry about Sennacherib and the proud Assyrians. Their language would not be heard in Jerusalem. The Jews would be able to see Jerusalem as a tent with the ropes and tent pegs secure. “But there the glorious LORD will be unto us a place of broad rivers and streams; wherein shall go no galley with oars, neither shall gallant ship pass thereby.” (Isaiah 33:21) Those who serve the Lord faithfully will enjoy the wonderful presence of the Lord and they will also enjoy many great blessings from His hands.

Isaiah 33:22-24, For the Lord, our ruler, the Lord, our commander, the Lord, our king—he will deliver us. Though at
this time your ropes are slack, the mast is not secured, and the sail is not unfurled, at that time you will divide up a great quantity of loot; even the lame will drag off plunder. No resident of Zion will say, “I am ill”; the people who live there will have their sin forgiven. (NET)

The Lord is our lawgiver and judge - Isaiah 33:22-24: God is pictured as lawgiver, judge and king. The Jews could claim God as judge because He pleaded their case against the enemy. He was the lawgiver because they belonged to Him. He was king in that He gave laws, expected His laws to be carried out and He defended His people. Humble repentance was the cure for the sins and miseries that were being faced by the people of God. The most effective way to avoid national judgment and punishment is for the people to make amends with God concerning their sins. The forsaking of sin leads a nation to be able to hope in the mercy of God. Men often think that they are in charge of the nations. Nothing can be further from the truth. God is the lawmaker and when nations fail to respect His leadership they are headed for trouble. The Lord is our judge. Let us surrender ourselves to the law that God has given because we will be judged by it. The Lord is our king and as such He carries out His own laws. God promised to defend the Jews and punish the Assyrians. He compared the Assyrians to a ship with its rigging loose, its mast shaky, and its sail not spread. God promised that the day was coming when even the lame would take what they wanted from the Assyrians. The army of Sennacherib would be so weak and destroyed that the Jews would plunder their possessions without any resistance. The most disabled of the people of Jerusalem would share in the spoils. Even those who were sick and diseased would use what strength they had to take what they needed from the Assyrians. God had removed their sickness and blessed them with forgiveness. The picture is that their sins had brought their
miseries upon them. The fact that the miseries were taken away indicates that they were forgiven. The psalmist wrote of God, “Who forgiveth all thine iniquities; who healeth all thy diseases.” (Psalm 103:3)
Conclusion:

Our God is exalted and He is more powerful than Sennacherib, Assyria or any other person or nation. “The LORD is exalted; for he dwelleth on high: he hath filled Zion with judgment and righteousness.” (Isaiah 33:5) Before it is too late, let us turn to God, lest we face sure and certain punishment. God wants us to learn, through Sennacherib and the Assyrians, that sin brings certain and severe misery!

By Charles Box, Walnut Street Church of Christ, P. O. Box 551, Greenville, Alabama 36037
Questions

on

Isaiah 33:1-24

1. Search your heart. Whom do you really trust? __________________
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   ____________________________
   ____________________________
   ____________________________
   ____________________________

2. What do Isaiah 33:1 and Galatians 6:7-9 say to us? ______________
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   ____________________________
   ____________________________
   ____________________________
   ____________________________

3. Who was Sennacherib? Relate important events of his life. __________
   ____________________________
   ____________________________
   ____________________________
   ____________________________
   ____________________________

4. What would happen to Assyria? ______________________________
   ____________________________
   ____________________________
   ____________________________
   ____________________________
   ____________________________
5. What would happen to Judah and Jerusalem? ______________________________________________________
__________________________________________________________________________________________
__________________________________________________________________________________________
__________________________________________________________________________________________
__________________________________________________________________________________________
__________________________________________________________________________________________
__________________________________________________________________________________________

6. What accounted for the difference between what would happen to Assyria and what would happen to Judah and Jerusalem? ______________________________________________________
__________________________________________________________________________________________
__________________________________________________________________________________________
__________________________________________________________________________________________
__________________________________________________________________________________________
__________________________________________________________________________________________
__________________________________________________________________________________________

7. “The ____________ is our ____________, the ____________ is our ____________, the ____________ is our ____________; he will ________________ us.” (Isaiah 33:22)

8. What message did God send to Sennacherib? (Isaiah 33:1) __________________________________________
__________________________________________________________________________________________
__________________________________________________________________________________________
__________________________________________________________________________________________
__________________________________________________________________________________________
__________________________________________________________________________________________
9. ______________ should be _______________ ________________
in our _______________ than _______________ the ________________
of the ________________ of the ________________.

10. From whom did divine help for Judah and Jerusalem come? Relate
the events associated with the providing of this divine help. _________
_________________________________________________________________
_________________________________________________________________
_________________________________________________________________
_________________________________________________________________
_________________________________________________________________
_________________________________________________________________

11. Describe the conditions in Judah and Jerusalem before and after
God intervened. ___________________________________________________________________
_________________________________________________________________
_________________________________________________________________
_________________________________________________________________
_________________________________________________________________
_________________________________________________________________

12. ______________, both ______________ and ________________,
would ________________ of what ________________ had done to the
______________ and they would stand in ________________ of his
______________ ________________.

13. Is it enough to be religious? Explain your answer. ________________
_________________________________________________________________
_________________________________________________________________
_________________________________________________________________
_________________________________________________________________
_________________________________________________________________
________________________
14. List characteristics of the religious person who pleases God. ______
__________________________________________________________
__________________________________________________________
__________________________________________________________
__________________________________________________________

15. There will be many ______________ ______________ for those who ______________ ______________, ______________ ______________ and ______________ ______________. They that ______________ the ______________ shall not ______________ any ________________.

16. “Now unto the ______________ ______________, ______________, ______________, the ______________ ______________ for ______________ and _________________. Amen.” (1 Timothy 1:17)

17. What did God provide regarding the king of Assyria? ______________
__________________________________________________________
__________________________________________________________
__________________________________________________________
__________________________________________________________

18. Those who ______________ the ______________ ______________ will ______________ the ______________ ______________ of the ______________ and they will also ______________ ______________ from his ________________.
19. God is our _____________, ______________ and ______________. How does God function in these three ways in the Christian era? _____

20. ______________ ________________ was the ______________ for the ________________ and ________________ that were being ________________ by the ________________ of ________________. The most effective way to ________________ ________________ and ________________ is for the ________________ to make ________________ with ________________ concerning their ________________. The ________________ of ________________ ________________ a ________________ to be able to ________________ in the ________________ of ________________.

21. Why should we surrender ourselves to the law of God? ______________

22. How are the Assyrians described? To what are they compared? ___

23. Their ______________ had brought their ______________ upon them. The fact that their ______________ was _______________ ________________ indicates that they were ________________.

24. Our God is ______________ and he is more ______________ than any ________________, nation or combination of ______________ and ________________.

25. God want us to _______________ that ________________ brings _______________ and _______________ ________________!